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ABSTRACT

The City University of New York/New York City Board of Education (CUNY/BOE) Student Mentor Program is a collaborative program sponsored by the CUNY Office of Student Affairs in which college students serve as mentors to high school students. The main goal of the program is to form solid relationships between college and high school students in order to prevent the high school students from dropping out of school. This is a handbook designed to prepare college students for their roles as mentors for which they earn college credit and are graded. The handbook begins by defining "mentoring" and giving an overview of the program, including its origins, goals, and structure. Information about potential concerns is given in the form of 12 questions and answers. Topics include: what is expected of the mentor, characteristics of the mentee, how mentors and mentees are paired, when and how mentors and mentees will meet together, content of the program, and kinds of activities for mentors and mentees to do together. Advice on dealing with difficulties in mentoring is provided. Appendices include the mentee parent letter and permission form, mentee commitments, guidelines for goal setting, and sample goal planning worksheets. (ABL)

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SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES WORKING TOGETHER

CUNY/BOE STUDENT MENTOR PROGRAM

MENTOR HANDBOOK

SPRING 1988

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CUNY/BOE STUDENT MENTOR PROGRAM

A Collaborative Program

MENTOR HANDBOOK

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Spring 1988

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INTRODUCTION

This handbook is designed to prepare you for your role as a mentor in the CUNY/BOE Student Mentor Program. It will be your chief resource for the training you will receive before you even meet your mentee. It also discusses many of the topics that your coordinator will cover in detail during your weekly mentor meetings. You should use it too as a reference manual for questions you may have any time during your mentoring experience.

The handbook begins by defining "mentoring" and giving you an overview of the program you are now part of--its origins, goals, and structure. In the following section, you will find answers to many of your concerns about the program and your function in it: what is expected of you, who your mentee will be, how you will be paired, when and how you will meet together, what the groundrules are, etc. Then, you will read about the content of the program--fostering a supportive relationship and advising your mentee about school, college, and work--and the kinds of activities to do with your mentee. Perhaps, the activity you'll spend the most time learning about is how to set a goal plan with your mentee. Finally, you'll get advice on how to handle some of the potential difficulties in mentoring.

Students who are in this semester's career exploration pilot project should surely read the section devoted to them, as well as the rest of the handbook.

Don't just read the handbook once and put it aside. To get the most out of it, carry it with you and refer to it often. Thoroughly knowing it will even enhance the quality of your relationship with your mentee, a relationship we hope you will enjoy and learn a lot from.

MENTORING DEFINED: IDEA AND EXAMPLES

The ancient Greek poet Homer first coined the word "mentor" in his epic poem, The Odyssey. The great warrior Odysseus knew he would be away from home for many years, so he chose a man named Mentor to be the guardian and tutor of his son. Thus, mentor came to mean any "trusted counselor or guide." More recently, the term has grown to encompass a variety of other roles: coach, advocate, facilitator, buddy, tutor, and friend. In the CUNY/BOE Student Mentor Program, a mentor means a college student who is a friend, a role model, and a career and academic guide for a high school student, whom we call the "mentee."

Many successful people have had mentors in their lives. Most great athletes point to a coach who encouraged them. In his autobiography, The Greatest, Muhammad Ali credits his manager, Herbert Muhammad, as being one of the reasons for his success. Some prominent political leaders have had famous mentors too. The Rev. Jesse Jackson, for instance, is one of the many people whose apprenticeship to the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. led to a famous civil rights career. Dona Felisa, the first Alcaldesa (female Mayor) of San Juan, was mentored by Luis Munoz Maris, founder of the Popular Democratic Party in Puerto Rico. In the business world, it is a well-known fact that Andrew Carnegie (as in The Carnegie Foundation and Carnegie Hall) developed more successful leaders of industry than any other great American industrialist. Most of Carnegie's proteges rose from the ranks of ordinary laborers.

The high school students you will be working with have probably never encountered mentors in their environments. On the other hand, a mentor or mentors may have played a key role in your development. Your mentor might have been someone in school, on the job, on the playing field, in church, or in a club who gave you encouragement and much needed advice. Your mentee needs the same supportive relationship with you. In thinking about how to be a good mentor, consider the ways you may have been mentored, why it was so positive for you, and how you can give the same type of experience to your mentee.

THE CUNY/BOE STUDENT MENTOR PROGRAM

Forty-five percent of all public school students in New York City do not finish high school. In 1985, the City University of New York (CUNY) and the New York City Board of Education (BOE) formed a partnership to fight this alarming dropout rate. They decided that a mentoring program would be one of the ways to encourage students who might drop out to stay in school. It was felt that solid relationships with college students might help troubled high school students decide not only to stay in school, but to go on to college. Accordingly, the CUNY/BOE Student Mentor program employs one-to-one mentoring relationships to achieve its major goals:

- o to create favorable educational experiences for motivating students to complete high school.
- o to prepare high school students for setting realistic educational and career goals.
- o to broaden the learning experience of college students by engaging them in helping relationships and community service, an opportunity also to strengthen their professional and interpersonal skills.

More than 2,000 college and high school students have participated in the program since its inception. This semester, 15 site programs throughout the city have enrolled approximately 300 mentor/mentee pairs. (See the inside front cover for a list of the Spring 1988 programs.) Each program consists of around 20 mentors from a specific CUNY college interacting with mentees from a high school which is usually nearby. The success of each program depends largely on the working relationship between the high school coordinator and the college coordinator, each of whom is responsible for the recruitment and pairing of students, their training and supervision at weekly meetings, and program events. All coordinators meet monthly with the program central staff. The college coordinator is usually the instructor of the course in which the mentors are enrolled; the high school coordinator is a teacher or counselor.

The program's central staff (see list) is responsible for administering the overall program. Our duties include visiting all program sites in order to see how well each one is running and to assist coordinators, mentors, and mentees when needed. You'll get to meet us three times during the semester--in an early training session, at a midterm discussion of your progress, and again at the end of the term when we help you give us the information we need for overall program evaluation. During these meetings, our goal is not to judge you personally; we have nothing to do with your grade. What we need is your honesty and candor so that we can be helpful and work toward improving the program.

12 QUESTIONS FREQUENTLY ASKED BY NEW MENTORS

This section answers the questions new mentors most frequently ask about the program. The information is based on the cumulative program experience of mentors and mentees, coordinators, and central staff. Be sure to discuss anything that is still not clear to you with your coordinator and other mentors at the weekly meetings.

We have divided the questions into two categories: you as mentor, and you and your mentee.

You as Mentor

1. What is required of me?

We are looking for committed and concerned people to become mentors. Take your commitment seriously and you will probably not have any problems fulfilling what is required of you.

In order to become a mentor, you have already:

- o established with your coordinator that you are in good academic standing, preferably with a 2.5 GPA or better.
- o provided your coordinator with a letter of recommendation from a former teacher, employer or professional.
- o signed the mentor's declaration.
- o had a screening interview with the coordinator at which any questions about your eligibility were settled.

As a mentor, you will be required to:

- o attend weekly mentor sessions which will be part of your classes or scheduled separately by your coordinator. At these meetings you will discuss the progress of your relationship and receive ongoing training and supervision from your coordinator.
- o schedule and meet with your mentee each week for at least two hours during ten consecutive weeks of this semester.
- o take the initiative to contact your mentee if he or she does not show up for a one-to-one session.
- o go to all program special events and joint activities scheduled during the course of the semester.

- o be professional by contacting your coordinator at the first sign of any difficulty.
- o keep official attendance of your one-to-one sessions on forms your coordinator will give you.
- o keep thorough logs of your experience as a mentor in the Mentor Log Book you will receive.
- o give necessary information about your mentor experience on program forms (Midterm and Endterm Log Reports; Mentor Endterm Questionnaire). These appear and are explained in the Mentor Log Book.

These are the things which you must do as a mentor. But above all, we want you to sincerely attempt to make a difference in your mentee's life. That's what really matters!

2. What am I expected to achieve with my mentee?

What's the difference between a requirement and an achievement? A requirement is usually a demand which someone places on you, but an achievement is an accomplishment, something you usually feel good about.

We expect you to achieve several things with your mentee. We expect you to develop a stable, trusting relationship. This will be evident from how often you meet with your mentee and whether or not you initiate calling if your mentee doesn't show up.

We expect you to advise your mentee about how to be a better student, how to cope with personal problems, and how to find the resources that can help him/her. This will depend upon the manner in which you use the information and advice you get from the training/supervisory mentor sessions.

We expect you to instill a sense of responsibility in your mentee. A sense of responsibility to his/her studies. A sense of responsibility to attending school and classes. A sense of responsibility to his/her job. A sense of responsibility to his/her college and career future. And most of all, a sense of responsibility to his/her self.

3. How will my participation be graded?

Your college coordinator determines how your participation in the program will be graded. Your fulfillment of the basic requirements of the program counts a great deal. However, your grade is not based on the success of your relationship, but rather on your commitment to making it work, as well as your

fulfilling other program obligations.

4. What will I get out of the program?

Since mentoring is a course (or a field component of a course), you will get course credits and a grade for your participation. But, you will get a lot more too.

Working with your mentee will sharpen many of your skills--among them your communication, your listening, and your problem-solving skills. You will learn a lot about the public school system--how it does and doesn't work. You will learn how to use resources in your college, the high school and your community---many of which you may not have known existed. What's more, you will improve your professional skills, especially if you are planning a career in teaching, human services, or another one of the helping professions or social sciences.

You will also discover much about yourself--strengths you never knew you had, and perhaps some areas for improvement, too. As you work with and help a particular younger person, you will learn a lot about what you have to offer others.

Finally, you will have the satisfaction of having provided a valuable human and community service--helping a struggling youngster stay in school. Best of all, you may also develop a personally rewarding relationship that you'll want to continue for its own sake.

You and Your Mentee

5. Who are the mentees?

The mentees are high school students facing the difficulties of being teenagers in the 1980's. Basically, they are the same as you and me. Just like us, they experience up's and down's. Also like us, they need assistance every now and then.

The overwhelming majority of mentees have academic troubles. Most are tenth-grade underachievers in reading and/or math, who may be a term or two behind in school. They may also cut classes because of a lack of interest in the subject matter or because they perceive their teacher as being boring. However, not many mentees are among the ranks of constantly truant students.

Family hardships are also common. A lot of the mentees come from single-parent homes, live in public housing, and receive some type of public assistance. Some have also been affected by family disruptions. And a few each semester must face the pressures of being single parents.

The mentees come from many cultural backgrounds. Some demonstrate limited proficiency in English because English is not their native language. Others have recently come to America from foreign countries, so they are still making the transition to our culture.

One result of these dislocations and troubles is that mentees do not always view school as being the most important thing in their lives. However, most can prosper if they are just given personal attention from a committed and caring adult who encourages them to believe in themselves. The fact that they have volunteered for the program means they have already taken a step in the right direction.

High school teachers and counselors encourage students to become mentees who:

- o are tenth graders, who will be sixteen by the end of the program.
- o are academically "at risk."
- o have time to participate in an after-school program.
- o can benefit from a one-to-one relationship.

Like you, mentees make specific commitments when they join the program; in fact, some of their commitments match yours. For the complete list, see the Mentee Commitment Form, Appendix B.

6. How will I be paired with my mentee?

Each program has its own way of pairing mentors and mentees. But generally, this is what happens.

You and the other college students in your program will fill out Mentor Profile Forms, which will be shared with the high school students. While the mentees review your profile sheets, you will be given the opportunity to review theirs. Mentors and mentees then meet one or two times as a group to get to know each other through a variety of activities, such as informal talking, conversational games, or a scavenger hunt.

By the fourth week of the term, each mentee tells the high school coordinator who he/she would like as mentor. This procedure helps the mentee feel committed and responsible to the mentoring relationship. The high school and college coordinators then meet to determine the pairs, the college coordinator consults with the mentors, and finally the pairs are formalized at what we call the "kick off" event.

Of course, this process does not guarantee ideal pairings in every case. The more flexible you are about who you're going to work with, the better your attitude will be toward your mentee.

7. When and where should my mentee and I meet?

When and where you meet your mentee will vary according to both of your schedules. Remember though that this is an after-school activity for your mentee, and that does limit your time. Your commitment is for one two-hour session or two one-hour sessions, whichever works best for you.

The best way to avoid any schedule conflict is if the two of you sit down during your first one-to-one session and set a day and time you can meet each week (for example, Tuesday from 3:30 to 5:30). Both of you should record the date and the time on the program calendars you receive; you should model the behavior for your mentee.

Establish groundrules for confirming meetings, notifying each other if one of you can't make a session, setting how long each of you will wait before deciding that the other one has missed an appointment, and being in touch immediately after a missed appointment. Week by week, define exactly just where you will meet, for instance, "inside the front door of the library" instead of "at the library."

Make sure that your mentee keeps his/her parent or guardian informed about where and when you are meeting. It is probably best if you get special permission for any evening or weekend sessions. In situations which involve driving your mentee, you must obtain written permission from the parent or guardian.

All of your one-to-one sessions must take place in public places. It is never permissible for you to visit your mentee's home if his/her parent or guardian is not there. Also, you should avoid taking your mentee to your home unless it is a necessity and you have obtained permission from your mentee's parent.

8. What if my mentee wants academic help I can't provide?

This is not uncommon. Your mentee's worst class might also be yours. Some mentors are able to refer mentees to their college's tutoring program or learning lab for help in specific subjects. Other mentors have been able to locate tutoring programs in the mentee's high school or in the community. The bottom line is to try to find a resource that can help your mentee--even after the program is finished. Talk to your high school and college coordinators; they should have some suggestions on who can assist you.

9. What should I do if my mentee misses a one-to-one session?

"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" is true when it comes to missed appointments. From the outset of your relationship you must instill a sense of responsibility in your mentee about coming to one-to-one sessions. You have to help your mentee to understand that when he/she misses an appointment with you, it's not like school where the class can go on without them.

Since some of the mentees who volunteer for our program have problems attending classes, they might miss a session or two. If your mentee misses a one-to-one session, you should take the initiative to contact him or her as soon as possible. You should also let your mentee know how you feel about the missed session.

If you're unable to reach your mentee or absence persists, contact the high school coordinator immediately. Catch the problem before it happens. (See HANDLING POTENTIAL DIFFICULTIES)

10. Will I be reimbursed for money I spend as a mentor?

No, the program can not reimburse you for money you spend as a mentor. But remember that you are not required to lay out your own money to do things with your mentee. So don't feel obligated to spend your money on dining out or going to the movies. If you want to spend your own money in these ways, you may, but it is not expected of you.

Nor are you obligated to pay for your mentee's share of the things you do together. If you can't agree to "go dutch," avoid costly activities altogether. Don't try to buy your mentee's friendship.

Remember too that the best things in life are free: tour the college campus, use recreational facilities, attend a college class together, visit the high school, go to a library, take a walk in the park, or just sit and talk. Be creative. Your coordinators may have additional suggestions and we will try to keep you apprised of special free events that you can attend with your mentee on CUNY campuses. (See SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR MENTORS AND MENTEES.)

11. What contact should I have with my mentee's parents?

At the very least, you should introduce yourself to your mentee's parent(s) or guardian, either by calling soon after you are paired or at a parent event the high school coordinator will probably hold early in the term.

Remember that the parent(s) or guardian knows about the program because he/she has read a letter explaining it and has signed a detailed consent form allowing the child to be a participant. You should read these documents (see appendix A) to learn what the parent knows about the program.

You will initiate further contact with your mentee's parent if you seek permission to drive your mentee somewhere or to meet your mentee at night or a weekend, or if you visit your mentee's home.

Just how much contact will depend on yourself, the parents, and of course the type of relationship existing between the mentee and his/her parents. Some parents are understandably curious (if not concerned) about anyone who spends time alone with their child. Some want to join the mentor in doing what is best for their child. Others may not be any help at all. No matter what kind of contact you have with parents, remember:

- o to assure the parents that you are being trained and supervised by program personnel, and
- o to assure your mentee that you are not collaborating with the parents and jeopardizing the special and confidential nature of the mentoring relationship.

12. What happens to our relationship at the end of the semester?

No one expects your mentoring experience to last forever. However, you and your mentee may agree to continue your relationship after the end of the semester. That would be great; a new friendship is one of the best rewards that can accrue from being a mentor.

On the other hand, you may not have the time nor the inclination to keep meeting with your mentee as much as during the program--or at all. At the same time, you might sense that your mentee is not ready to end the relationship. There are several things you can do. Perhaps, you will agree to see one another or talk on the phone from time to time to ease the separation for your mentee. Or perhaps during the semester you will have assisted your mentee in finding another "mentor," maybe a guidance counselor or teacher, who can take your place.

It is important throughout the term that you think about, plan for, and discuss the end of the term with your mentee, other mentors, and your coordinator.

PROGRAM CONTENT: WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR MENTEE

Now that you understand your role as mentor and some of the program's groundrules, you need to know how you will spend your time with your mentee. As a mentor, you will strive to develop a supportive relationship with your mentee. You will also help your mentee function more effectively by advising him/her on high school, college and the world of work. Of course, you must take the lead in creating a supportive relationship. Two important aspects of that function that you may not have given much thought to are being a good role model and a good listener.

Role Modeling

One aspect of being a mentor is acting as a good role model for your mentee. A major premise of this program is that students at City University colleges--many of whom have come through the city's public high school system themselves--inherently make good role models for students still in high school. You can reveal your experiences about how you got through high school and are succeeding in college.

Remember the biggest impression you make on your mentee may not be a conscious effort on your part. Your role as a mentor puts you into the position as a role model whether you like it or not. You may be your mentee's only exposure to a college student. Be aware of your image as a role model without being self-conscious of your actions.

It is not difficult to be a good role model. You must simply be yourself. Your mentee will know if you're acting or feeling very self-conscious. Many of your behaviors and mannerisms will be imitated by your mentee. If your mentee grows close to you and begins to like you, he/she may even start to model himself/herself after you in unpredictable ways--the way you dress or the way you speak. There is nothing you can do to prevent this. It happens in many relationships--especially those involving a younger person.

Listening

The second aspect of being a good mentor is learning how to listen. It takes practice to know when to listen and when to talk. Practice your listening and communication skills. Create an atmosphere in the relationship that is conducive to the mentee being open and honest with you. It is not your responsibility to entertain the mentee with conversation; rather, learn to focus on what the mentee has to say. Learn how to encourage a dialogue and steer clear of monologues so your mentee will not be turned off.

Being a good listener is a difficult skill to master. You need to be aware of verbal and non-verbal messages: listen to the tone of voice; notice facial expressions and body language. Check your distance; you may be too close or too far away to listen effectively. Practice active listening skills--mirroring or rephrasing statements shows your mentee that you have not only been listening, but understand what has been said. Passive listening skills may encourage your mentee to verbalize but may put too much pressure on him/her. An acknowledgement that you want him/her to speak more by offering leads such as "go on" and "I see" may prove effective.

We encourage you to follow your mentee's lead and to be sensitive to where he/she wants to go with a conversation. If the mentee shares something personal, reciprocate by giving similar information about yourself. You're not a trained professional to offer advice or analysis. You are a friend in a conversation. You should relate to each other as equals. Don't probe beyond where the mentee feels comfortable. You know how to do this with friends; try to do the same with your mentee.

How you listen and react to your mentee may make a significant difference in how you will work together. Listen to your mentee to identify his/her likes, dislikes, areas of strength, areas that need improvement, and develop a goal plan that is tailored to his/her wants and needs.

It takes time for a relationship to develop. It's natural to be somewhat guarded at first. Your mentee may be shy and closed-mouthed. That's why it's good to have things to do instead of relying only on conversation. Be patient; don't give up: keep practicing and improving your listening skills. Talk less and hear more. Be positive! Attitudes of respect, attentiveness, openness, and acceptance will encourage your mentee to seek your guidance and discuss alternatives.

Goal Setting: An Advisement Technique

Being a good role model and a good listener are important ways to help build a supportive relationship. Being a good listener will also improve your ability to offer your mentee sound advice about school, college, and the world of work.

A useful way for you to approach these advisement topics is through the technique of setting goals with your mentee. A goal will help define and focus the specific area you and your mentee will work on; it will help to structure some of your time together too. Finally, if you choose your goal well, both you and your mentee will feel successful by the end of the semester.

A good goal is a realistic goal, and a realistic goal in this program is a limited one. It is unrealistic to believe that you can bring about a major change in your mentee's life in a mere ten weeks. You might be setting yourself up for much frustration if you try. Instead, listen carefully for something reasonable that your mentee wants to accomplish, something you feel you can assist your mentee to succeed in within the ten weeks you have together.

We expect that by mid-term you will develop at least one goal plan with your mentee. A goal plan not only defines a goal, but also shows how you plan to achieve it. Here's a sample three-part goal plan. (The "I" is your mentee, not you.)

Goal: I will improve my grade in math this term.

Mentee Activity: I will do my math homework three times a week.

Joint Activities: We will review together before a test.

We will attend the mentee's math class.

We will find a math tutor for the mentee at the high school or college.

Note that the goal is set for success; it doesn't say the mentee will get 100 on a test or an A+. It is also based on the knowledge that this is something the mentee really wants to do. For more information about how to set goals with your mentee, see "Guidelines for Goal Setting" in Appendix C.

The mentee activity is a behavioral task that challenges the mentee in a useful way and does not overwhelm him/her. The task must be set very specifically to the needs of the particular student. It should be a two-part statement: activity + frequency. The purpose of the activity is to help your mentee learn through experience the positive relationship between a repeated action and a desired result.

The joint activities are the three or four things you and your mentee plan to do together, chosen because they push toward the goal. Note that these are one-time occurrences that help build the mentee's confidence and sense of self-sufficiency.

You'll get plenty of help in working on goals from your coordinator. Also, Appendix D contains sample goal plans for high school participation and completion, helping with an academic subject, college and careers, and job skills. Please do not copy or strictly follow these examples. They are only suggestive and meant to prod your thinking. Moreover, the Midterm and Endterm Log Reports in your log book will help you assess how well you

are progressing toward your goal and what changes you may need to make.

Remember to set you and your mentee up for success by setting a realistic goal and goal plan. Helping your mentee achieve a single limited goal can lead to the habit of setting goals to attain even greater results--finishing high school, going to college, and choosing a suitable career.

Your Mentee and High School

Most high school students don't know much about their own school and our mentees are, in many ways, just typical high school students. They are not aware that the school is structured to provide help for them. They may not be aware of the range of available resources and services housed in the building. They may not know in what ways teachers, counselors, assistant principals and the principal can assist them. They may need assistance in identifying key people to whom they can turn for specific services. Most high schools have either a handbook or folder (or both) describing the school's services and resources. Obtain a copy. It will prove invaluable in learning more about high school life.

By working with a high school student, you'll have a unique opportunity to learn about what's really going on at the school from your mentee's point of view. At the same time you'll be able to assess the spheres in which the mentee is doing well and coping with the complexity and demands of high school life. You'll also be able to ascertain the areas in which the mentee is not doing well and to observe the differences between the perceptions of students and teachers.

Try to establish the relationship on equal footing by giving the mentee a helping role. Ask the mentee to assume the responsibility to teach you about the high school--to show you around, to tell you about the school, to introduce you to teachers and to other students. Why not consider attending a high school class? It may be quite some time since you attended high school and the class atmosphere can only be appreciated by being there.

Visits to the high school should be as practical as possible. For example, assist your mentee in locating the office that handles working papers or accompanying your mentee to see the grade advisor to find out how many credits are required to graduate and what courses he/she needs to complete high school. Explore other courses of study available in the school--academic, business or general--and programs like ours that provide additional resources.

Recognize that the atmosphere and regulations at the high school are quite different. The high school welcomes mentors to participate in their activities, but arrangements must be made in advance. Speak to the high school coordinator about how arrangements should be made for the specific school. Clearance is generally required at the security desk, and you will probably have to sign in at the office. Make sure you make the necessary arrangements in advance so that you do not experience frustration by not being admitted and your mentee does not experience disappointment by your absence.

Introducing Your Mentee to College Life

One of the most important things you can accomplish this semester is to give your mentee a real sense of what it's like to go to college. Most prospective students will not have had the unique opportunity you will be providing for your mentee. It's one thing to be told about college life; it's another thing to be able to experience it firsthand through the eyes of an older student. This may also be your opportunity, if you're not as involved as you want to be, to take more advantage of all your school has to offer.

One of the easiest ways to introduce your mentee to college life is by giving a tour of the campus. During your first or second one-to-one session, take note of your mentee's specific interests and use them to guide your future activities. Take your mentee to a class that he/she is interested in. Arrange to use facilities such as the lab or gym. Visit the library, go to a club meeting, or make arrangements to use the learning labs or tutoring services. Go to a campus social event together. Introduce your mentee to your campus friends so that he/she can get to know other college students besides yourself. You may want to arrange some of these activities with another mentee/mentor pair so that they do not overwhelm your mentee.

Like most high school students, your mentee may have little information about how to choose a school, how to apply, and how to get financial aid. Think of all the things you wish you had known about these processes and share your "hindsight" with the mentee. But remember that actions speak louder than words. So visit the admissions and financial aid offices, speak to a counselor, obtain sample forms. It would also be helpful to assist your mentee in obtaining information about a specific program that interests him/her. Find out if this program is available at your school and if not, where in the CUNY system it is available. If your mentee begins to view the prospect of going on to college as a desirable and attainable goal, it may inspire him/her to finish high school.

Introducing Your Mentee to the World of Work

Just like college, the world of work may seem like foreign territory to your mentee. Your mentee's decision about staying in school may be related to how he/she feels about future job prospects. This is the time to show your mentee the connection between a good job and finishing school.

Your mentee may already have some experience in the working world. He/she may have a part-time job after school, or may have had a summer job. Many high school students work because they want to, but many others are working out of necessity. The opportunities available to your mentee at this stage of life are extremely limited. It's your responsibility to broaden his/her view regarding career possibilities. Assist your mentee in trying to distinguish between a job and a career. Invite him/her to visit you on the job, or arrange for a tour of a workplace that interests him/her. You may also be able to provide some advice about how to find a job in your field, what to expect at an interview, and so on.

If your mentee has a career aspiration which will necessitate taking specific college courses, you can arrange for him/her to talk with someone in that discipline for information regarding this choice. If your mentee does not have a career in mind, visit your campus career planning office together, read the Dictionary of Occupational Titles, utilize other resources at the library, or speak with the career counselor at the high school.

Occasionally mentors have been able to assist their mentees in getting part-time or summer jobs. It is fine if you can be helpful in this way, but this is not your role. Remember not to make offers unless you are fairly certain of being able to do what you have promised.

Suggested Activities for Mentors and Mentees

Deciding what to do together is not as simple as selecting from a list of activities and making plans for the entire semester. Many of the things you do will depend upon how the relationship develops and what you both like to do.

Some mentees are anxious to experience a wide variety of activities. However, most mentees, despite their preparation for participation in the program, are not prepared to supply a list of things they want to accomplish. Your job is to develop with your mentee a list of possible activities, some of which you will incorporate into your goal plan. However, don't expect your mentee to welcome all your suggestions. You may have to work hard to uncover your mentee's motivation so that he/she will want to do some of the things you suggest. This is an important topic to discuss with your coordinator and in your college classroom

with other mentors. While social activities are fun and give you a chance to get to know each other outside of the school context, it is important that school-based activities be a focus of the relationship.

If you're having trouble coming up with productive things to do together, be sure to explore that problem with the other mentors in your group sessions. Listen to their reports about their successful activities and ask for their suggestions. Be prepared to share your positive experiences also; other mentors may benefit from your suggestions. Be aware that each mentee is an individual and that a successful activity for one may not be as successful with another.

Your list should have a heavy emphasis on college-based activities. The primary focus of the program is to encourage mentees to complete high school and enhance their awareness of and readiness for higher education and work. The more positive their exposure to college, the more motivated they may be to remain in school.

The list of suggested activities on the following page incorporates suggestions from previous sections and others that have been successful in the past. Feel free to adapt the list to your relationship and then be prepared to share with us those activities that were effective.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR MENTORS AND MENTEES

A CHECKLIST

- ☐ Tour the high school
- ☐ Tour the college campus, perhaps highlighting the institutional resources and facilities which relate to your goal plan
- ☐ Learn how to use the resources at a library
- ☐ Conduct a research project using the college library
- ☐ Go to a class together at the college or high school
- ☐ Talk to a college admissions officer
- ☐ Look at a college bulletin & schedule of classes
- ☐ Learn the benefits of time management
- ☐ Identify and learn how to utilize high school & college resources
- ☐ Find out how to apply for financial aid at the college
- ☐ Learn how to work with computers at the college
- ☐ Learn where to get counseling
- ☐ Work on specific homework or classroom assignments
- ☐ Socialize with college students
- ☐ Create a map or floor plan of the high school
- ☐ Visit the campus or high school tutoring center
- ☐ Use the college gym
- ☐ Visit some of the clubs and organizations at the college or high school
- ☐ Learn how to take notes
- ☐ Go to a high school or college sports or cultural event
- ☐ Visit the student center
- ☐ Listen to music together
- ☐ Go to a museum or zoo
- ☐ Take a walking tour of the neighborhood
- ☐ Discuss career options
- ☐ Visit the college career, guidance & placement office

PILOT PROJECT--
"MENTORING: THE HELPING RELATIONSHIP AND CAREER EXPLORATION"

As you know, mentoring in this program concentrates on fostering a supportive relationship and offering academic advisement. The pilot project differs from the regular program in that the activities focus more on career exploration. This shift is in keeping with the recent emphasis on career education in the City's high schools, which is based on the assumption that "at-risk" students are more likely to remain in school if they see the link between education and the workplace. Part of your role as a mentor is to help your mentee discover that link.

During Spring, 1988 there are two pilot programs: Curtis High School with the College of Staten Island and Martin Luther King, Jr. High School with John Jay College. All site programs are expected to adopt the career exploration focus in Fall, 1988.

Unlike the standard program, "Mentoring: The Helping Relationship and Career Exploration" contains a curriculum specially designed to facilitate a close working relationship between the mentors and mentees. You will both discuss the same topics at your respective weekly group meetings in preparation for your one-to-one sessions. You will work with your mentee on such activities as clarifying values, conducting a self-directed career inventory, developing skills awareness, applying for a social security card and working papers, exploring a career area, visiting a workplace, and interviewing an employee. These structured activities will promote conversation and camaraderie between you, and encourage your mentee to understand the connection between a high school diploma, a college degree, and a good job. Moreover, as your mentee learns about career goals and possibilities, so may you.

After the ten-week period, mentees will attend two workshops on getting and a keeping a job. Activities will include preparation for resume writing and job interviews. Guest speakers from industry and visits to business and industry sites are planned.

Mentees who meet their mentors regularly throughout the term and who complete all program assignments, including a project, will be referred to job interviews arranged by the BOE's Office of Collaborative Programs. The possibility of mentees earning some academic credit is currently under review.

The career focus integrates the program into a continuum as an entry-level experience leading to employment--first, part-time school year and summer employment; then, cooperative education opportunities and/or internship positions in the eleventh grade for students who want further employment.

HANDLING POTENTIAL DIFFICULTIES

Mentors are sometimes surprised to discover that their mentees are average and friendly teenagers struggling to become adults in a very complicated world. They may have their share of problems, but they themselves are not problems. Your mentee's concerns will most likely be ones you have faced yourself: how to be more self-confident, how to do better in a subject or school activity, how to get the attention you need or want, or how to depend less on peers and take more responsibility for yourself and your actions. You will be dealing with issues like these. They may get a bit sticky, but at least you will be on familiar ground. An important rule of thumb is to:

THINK OF YOUR MENTEE AS A PERSON, NOT AS A PROBLEM.

Occasionally, however, mentors come up against problems of a more serious nature, problems they themselves may have great difficulty coping with. Generally, they are of two sorts: disturbing personal problems and insurmountable trouble in the relationship.

Personal Problems

Disturbing personal problems--such as pregnancy, substance abuse, and suicidal feelings--are likely to come up in two ways: early in the relationship in a gush of confidentiality or later when the mentee has truly developed trust in the mentor.

In the first instance, you may feel flattered that your mentee has taken to you so quickly, only to find that he/she clams up at subsequent meetings. This can happen for a number of reasons: the student becomes embarrassed and upset for having opened up so totally, or the student was only testing your trust, or the student feels better for having unloaded much pain or guilt. Whatever the reason, you are left in the lurch wondering what to do. You may feel the same way in the second situation also, when you know that the mentee's revelation has come because he/she has truly come to trust and value your friendship.

If your mentee presents a deep personal problem, your main concern must be to:

GET PROFESSIONAL HELP AS SOON AS IS WISELY POSSIBLE.

Your dilemma will be to get that help without betraying your mentee's confidence and trust. If you analyze the situation carefully, you will find that you have three main tasks: finding appropriate help, working effectively with your mentee, and taking care of yourself. Your college coordinator is probably your best all-around immediate resource. Here's a suggested procedure for immediate action that covers all these areas:

1. Listen to your mentee very carefully--not only to the details of the problem but to his/her feelings about it.

2. Understand that your mentee's confiding in you means that he/she is seeking help.

3. Explore with your mentee who else he/she can go to immediately for emotional support, professional help, or community service information--a family member, a doctor, a religious leader, a neighbor, the mentee coordinator or another teacher or counselor. Encourage the mentee to follow up immediately.

4. At the same time, be honest with your mentee. Tell him/her of your continuing concern and support, but that because you are not a professional, you must consult with the college coordinator for more ideas, guidance, and support for yourself. Assure the mentee that you will ask for his/her permission before doing anything else.

5. Consult with your college coordinator immediately. Your college coordinator is a neutral party who can offer concrete help and give you the support you need. He/she is trained to provide, or knows where to find, resources and referral services. Moreover, he/she can suggest ways for you to encourage a scared mentee to share the problem with a family member or a support professional at the high school. Avoid initiating discussion of the problem at a mentor meeting; rather, arrange a private conference with the coordinator.

6. Consult with the high school coordinator. The high school coordinator must be brought into the process quickly, for he/she best knows the services available at the school and can best find out if the school is aware of the problem and already treating it. If your mentee will not speak directly with the high school coordinator, gain his/her permission for either you or the college coordinator to do so--the sooner, the better.

Problems in the Relationship

Although you and your mentee may feel well-matched at the kickoff, problems of many kinds can arise in your relationship, just as they can in any other.

For one thing, the relationship may never get off the ground because somehow you never get to meet. In question 9 on page 10, we've already discussed what to do if your mentee misses a single appointment, but what do you do if he/she misses repeatedly? Or what do you do if you are meeting, but the relationship is not developing in a beneficial way or in a way that is comfortable for you?

No matter the reason, if you think something is going wrong, trust that feeling and, if you can, speak to your mentee about it immediately. Treat the problem seriously. And don't leave yourself in doubt. If you and your mentee cannot resolve the difficulty within two weeks, consult with your coordinator.

Both you and your mentee should understand that though each of you is committed to forming a solid relationship, not every relationship can succeed. Not everyone can work together. Each of you may be able to work better with someone else. If de-pairing is going to take place, it is best for it to happen as soon as possible. That way, both of you will have ample opportunity to try for a better relationship with a new partner.

Remember that you will not be graded on the success of your mentor relationship, but on the quality of your participation in the program.

Taking Care of Yourself

Although the main purpose of the Mentor Program is to serve the mentees, you should not feel that you have to sacrifice yourself for the well-being of your mentee. When problems such as the ones we have been discussing arise, you must remain conscious of your own needs and limitations. At what point should you seek advice? To what degree can you be emotionally committed? How much time can you devote to a mentee in crisis? Not only will answers to these questions vary from mentor to mentor; your own capacities will fluctuate with changes in your internal states. The important thing to remember is that you should know your own feelings and feel free to talk about them--perhaps with your mentee and surely with other mentors and your college coordinator.

Rejection, for instance, is a feeling that many mentors face at some point during the semester. It is difficult not to feel personal rejection if your mentee misses appointments, doesn't respond to phone calls, remains sullen at sessions, or does not fully cooperate in other ways. Too frequently though, mentors don't fully admit to feelings of rejection and that rebounds negatively on their performance. In order to avoid the feeling, they have to avoid the actual issue that has come up in the relationship. And frequently it is fear of rejection that keeps mentors from acting quickly and effectively when a serious personal problem arises in their mentees' lives. Our advice to you is to recognize and accept the feeling of rejection; then deal with it so that you can move beyond it to solve the truly pressing problem at hand.

Most likely, the problems mentioned in this section will not occur, and you will find mentoring itself a way of taking care of yourself.

Place on school letterhead

**CUNY/BOE STUDENT MENTOR PROGRAM
MENTEE PARENT LETTER**

Dear Parent:

Your child has been selected to participate in the CUNY/BOE Student Mentor Program at our high school. The goal of this after-school, student-to-student program is to increase the participants' interest and success in school.

The program will introduce your child to a mature and motivated adult from _____ College, who has volunteered to be a mentor. Each mentor has a special interest in young people and has been approved and trained for the role of mentor. The mentor will help your child with schoolwork and will explore the worlds of school, college, and work with your child.

Participation in the program means that we are asking your child to spend at least two (2) hours a week with a mentor. They will schedule their meetings together, and your child will tell you when and where these meetings will take place. They must take place in a public location--at the high school, the college, the workplace of the mentor, or elsewhere in the community.

In addition, your child will meet with other students in the program and the program coordinator for two (2) hours, once a week, after school. Together, they will focus on the building of life skills, and discuss their experiences with their mentors. The program will also sponsor group activities, some calling for parents' attendance and some scheduled in the evening or on weekends.

Your support is crucial to the success of the program. Your child can tell you more about the program because we have talked about it together. If you have any questions or concerns, please call _____ (_____), who will be working with all of the students and their mentors.

To show your support of the program, we ask that you sign the attached Parent Permission Form and Mentee Commitment Form and have your child return them to the school.

We will be holding a meeting for all parents of students in the program. We ask that you attend. You will get your invitation soon.

Thank you for your help and cooperation. We look forward to a very special and successful experience for your child.

Yours truly,

Principal

Program coordinator

Date

Place on school letterhead

CUNY/BOE STUDENT MENTOR PROGRAM

PARENT PERMISSION FORM

I give my child, _____, permission to participate fully in the CUNY/BOE Student Mentor Program. Specifically, I give permission for my child:

1. to have regularly scheduled one-to-one meetings with an approved and trained mentor, who is a student at the City University of New York. These meetings will be for at least two hours a week outside of school time, for a ten-week period. They will be held at public places agreed upon by my child and the mentor and approved by the program coordinator.
2. to attend a two-hour session after school one day a week with the other high school students in the program and the program coordinator.
3. to attend other group events offered by the program, which may occur in the evening or on weekends.

I understand that some activities of the program take place at sites other than the high school. I also understand that this is an after-school program and that a few activities may be scheduled for evenings and weekends.

Parent or Guardian Signature

Date

Place on school letterhead

CUNY/BOE STUDENT MENTOR PROGRAM

MENTEE COMMITMENT FORM

I _____ Homeroom _____, if chosen to
participate in the CUNY/BOE Student Mentor Program, agree to:

1. attend Weekly Mentee Group Meetings led by the high school coordinator;
2. meet with my mentor a minimum of 2 hours a week;
3. notify my mentor if I cannot keep an appointment;
4. notify my parents and the high school coordinator about scheduled appointments (date, time, and place) with my mentor;
5. keep a record of every session with my mentor;
6. share my mentoring experiences with the high school coordinator;
7. attend special events and activities.

Student Signature

Parent or Guardian Signature

Date

GUIDELINES FOR GOAL SETTING

Definition of a Goal: "Something you want to accomplish"

Why it helps

A goal is something to aim towards. Choices become clearer and you know what you're after.

Goals should be realistic and manageable. "Mini-goals" that can be reached quickly provide small successes which multiply and encourage you to work towards larger goals.

Setting goals

The Student Mentor Program pairs students for one semester. The actual one-to-one meetings occur over a ten-week period. Within this framework, the mentee and mentor should work together to set realistic goals for the mentee.

Goals should be short term, with manageable tasks to be completed during the ten weeks you meet. There will be tasks for the mentee to complete alone (of course, with the support of the mentor), and others the mentee and mentor will complete together. (See sample plans.)

Obstacles will surface, but instead of giving up, look for possible solutions. Remember that mentors are there to help mentees overcome the obstacles they face and to assist them in building a network of support within their high school.

A goal for the ten-week program should be a "mini-goal", one a mentee and mentor can:

1. **Own** - A goal must be something you really "want" to do.
2. **State clearly** - Know exactly what you want to achieve.
3. **Accomplish** - The goal must be realistic in terms of the time and energy you have.
4. **Control** - The goal must be possible for you to do.
5. **Measure** - Set time limits and levels of achievement.
6. **Be positive about** - Goals should encourage success.

Remember that a realistic "mini-goal" is do-able. It should be something you stand a good chance of achieving within the ten weeks. If you state your goal clearly, you will know when it has been achieved.

SAMPLE**CUNY/BOE STUDENT MENTOR PROGRAM
MENTEE/MENTOR GOAL PLANNING WORKSHEET***Be creative---modify---
exchange ideas---sult
your needs.***High School Participation & Completion**

GOALS List at least one.	ACTIVITIES FOR GETTING THERE	
	Mentee List at least one.	Together List at least three.
A. I will make a plan that shows everything I need to do in order to graduate from high school.	1. I will visit my high school guidance counselor regularly during the term.	1. We will explore other high school curricula. 2. We will explore other high schools. 3. We will learn what credits are needed to graduate from high school.
Other choices B. I will complete all the courses I am enrolled in this term. C. I will become actively involved in school (academically, socially, or culturally). D. Add your own. 33	Other choices 2. I will not cut my class in _____ during the Mentor program. 3. I will not be late to school more than _____ times. 4. I will attend school on a daily basis. 5. I will attend one school game or function every two weeks. 6. I will join at least one club or team of my interest and attend regularly. 7. I will discuss with my parents how I am doing in school on a weekly basis. 8. Add your own.	Other choices 4. We will visit the guidance counselor together. 5. We will attend a school function (academic, social, or cultural) together. 6. The mentor will accompany the mentee and his/her family to a school function. 7. We will explore possible clubs or teams to join at the high school. 8. We will attend a club meeting together. 9. The mentor will watch the mentee at practice or play. 10. Add your own. 34

SAMPLE

CUNY/BOE STUDENT MENTOR PROGRAM **MENTEE/MENTOR GOAL PLANNING WORKSHEET**

*Be creative---modify---exchange
 Ideas---sult your needs.*

Helping with an academic subject

GOALS List at least one.	ACTIVITIES FOR GETTING THERE	
	Mentee List at least one.	Together List at least three.
A. I will improve my grade in _____.	1. I will do my homework every night.	1. We will find a tutor or other ongoing help in the subject. 2. We will review the subject material before a test. 3. We will attend the high school class together.
Other choices B. I will pass _____. C. I will pass a test in _____. D. I will complete my term project in _____ on time. E. Add your own.	Other choices 2. I will participate meaningfully at least once in each class period. 3. I will take good notes every day. 4. I will study at least one hour before each test. 5. I will speak to the teacher at least once a week outside of class about any problems. 6. I will work with someone else on this subject at least twice a week. 7. I will go to the computer room and use the available software in this subject. 8. I will work on my term project 1/2 hour each day, five days a week until the completion of my project. 9. Add your own.	Other choices 4. We will review homework together 2-3 times. 5. We will review a test with the teacher after it is graded. 6. We will visit a college class together in this subject. 7. We will discover the possible usefulness of the subject for future use. 8. We will tour the college library. 9. We will develop a plan for how to complete a term project. 10. We will use the computer room at the college for available software for assistance and to prepare the final project. 11. Add your own.

SAMPLE**College & Careers****CUNY/BOE STUDENT MENTOR PROGRAM
MENTEE/MENTOR GOAL PLANNING WORKSHEET***Be creative---modify---exchange
ideas---sult your need.*

GOALS List at least one.	ACTIVITIES FOR GETTING THERE	
	Mentee List at least one.	Together List at least three.
A. I will develop a folder of information on three different colleges.	1. I will spend at least two hours a week, independently, to develop my college, career, or military service folder of information.	1. We will tour the college campus. 2. We will look at the college catalog from the mentor's college. 3. We will look at other college catalogs together.
Other choices B. I will develop a folder of information on three different careers. C. I will develop a folder of information on more than one branch of military service. D. Add your own.	<u>Suggestions on how to spend your two hours</u> 2. I will look at college catalogs to describe course requirements. 3. I will complete an application to take a college entrance exam. 4. I will complete a college application. 5. I will take a career inventory test. 6. I will interview at least one person in the field of my career choice. 7. I will visit at least one business in field of my choice to learn about employment opportunities that are available. 8. I will create a collage on careers or colleges. 9. I will use the Dictionary of Occupational Titles to describe three careers. 10. I will visit a recruitment office to describe three training programs the service has to offer. 11. Add your own.	Other choices 4. We will go to the library to explore college and career resources. 5. We will visit the library to learn how to use the Dictionary of Occupational Titles. 6. We will visit the college admissions office and speak to a counselor. 7. We will visit the college's career/placement office. 8. We will visit a class related to the mentee's career choice. 9. We will attend a career fair. 10. We will attend at least one college (academic, social, or cultural) function together. 11. We will visit the financial aid office to learn about scholarships, grants and student loans. 12. Add your own.

SAMPLE**Job Skills****CUNY/BOE STUDENT MENTOR PROGRAM
MENTEE/MENTOR GOAL PLANNING WORKSHEET***Be creative---modify---exchange
ideas---suit your needs.*

GOALS List at least one.	ACTIVITIES FOR GETTING THERE	
	Mentee List at least one.	Together List at least three.
A. I will do what I must to get my working papers.	1. I will visit the vocational/career counselor at my high school regularly to develop job seeking skills.	1. We will learn the steps of getting a job. 2. We will visit the college job placement office. 3. We will visit a Youth Employment Service.
Other choices B. I will have at least one interview for a job. C. I will get a job. D. I will keep my present job. E. I will get a better job. F. Add your own. 39	Other choices 2. I will look through the want ads at least two hours per week and clip at least three ads that interest me. 3. I will devote at least two hours per week to getting a job. 4. I will follow the steps of job seeking until I get a job. 5. I will go to work on time every day. 6. I will do unpleasant tasks at work without complaining at least three times a week. 7. I will not lose my temper at work more than once a week. 8. Add your own.	Other choices 4. We will visit the mentor's place of employment. 5. We will visit an employer of more than ten employees. 6. We will do a mock job interview together. 7. We will complete a job application together. 8. We will attend a job fair. 9. We will role play the employee/employer relationship. 10. Add your own. 40

USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

Academic Advisement

- o Grammar Hotline
York College..... (718) Re-Write

Career Counseling

- o The Door (NYC Board of Ed.)..... (718) 935-3077
- o New York City Job and Career Center... (212) 247-5650
- o NYC Public Library (Career Center).... (212) 340-0849

Pregnancy

- o Teen Pregnancy Networks
 - . Brooklyn..... (718) 875-1190 x219
 - . Bronx..... (212) 585-7996
 - . Manhattan..... (212) 751-5446
 - . Queens..... (718) 442-5579

Sexual Abuse/Assault

- o Victim Services Agency..... (212) 577-7777

Substance Abuse

- o Alcohol
 - . Alcoholism Council
of Greater New York..... (212) 935-7070
 - . Community Adolescent
Alternatives Program..... (718) 326-8247, 9
- o Cigarette Smoking
 - . American Cancer Society
Education Department..... (212) 586-8700
- o Drugs
 - . New York State Division of
Substance Abuse Services..... (212) 587-4385

Suicide Prevention

- o Help Line..... (212) 532-2400
- o Samaritans..... (212) 673-3000

Transit Authority Information

- for Buses and Subways..... (718) 330-1234